

ORTHOSTATIC HYPOTENSION

(BECOMING DIZZY WHEN GETTING UP)

What is Orthostatic Hypotension? (Becoming dizzy when getting up)

Orthostatic hypotension is a condition where your blood pressure drops when you get up. This can happen when moving from lying to sitting or standing. When your blood pressure drops, you may feel lightheaded, dizzy, faint or weak. These feelings may last a few seconds to several minutes.

What causes orthostatic hypotension? Orthostatic hypotension can be caused by many things. Some medications that cause orthostatic hypotension include heart, anxiety, anti-depressant, pain and fluid medications. Other causes of orthostatic hypotension include alcohol use, dehydration, Parkinson's disease, heart disease, changes with aging and pregnancy.

Is orthostatic hypotension life-threatening? No, orthostatic hypotension is not life-threatening but it can lead to fainting, passing out and falls. Falls can cause injury.

What Do I Need to Do?

How is orthostatic hypotension treated? Treatment for orthostatic hypotension includes many things. Your doctor may change your medications, give you intravenous (IV) fluids and encourage you to drink more fluids without caffeine. You may be given compression stockings to wear on your legs to help keep your blood pressure up. A physical therapist may teach you exercises to do before getting up to increase blood flow and other safety tips to decrease falling.

Why Is It Important For Me to Do This?

It is important for you to follow your doctor's medication and fluid recommendations so that your blood pressure stays at a healthy level. It is important for you to do the exercises and safety tips your physical therapist teaches you to prevent falling and injury. These treatments can get you back to your normal activities. Getting up slowly can also help decrease your risk of fainting and falling. You should follow-up with your doctor as recommended so that your blood pressure stays under control.